

THE BELL RINGER

GAVEL-TO-GAVEL MEETING UPDATES

ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION

Board members approved a contract agreement as presented with ALC Schools to provide transportation services for students who fall under the McKinney-Vento Act and live outside of district boundaries. According to Transportation Director Zach McKinney, several surrounding districts have utilized this company with great success. McKinney says while there is a fee associated with the service, it is lower than what it would cost for the district to provide transportation to students outside of the HSE boundary.

OPERATIONS PLAN REPORT

Superintendent Dr. Allen Bourff told board members on Wednesday that he is not yet recommending that grades 5-12 return on-site (Phase III) 100 percent. He cited that students in these grades have only been back on campus for five days and while the experience has been "fairly positive," he would like to continue in Phase II at this time. Administration is also continuing to work through some challenges relating to cohorting the secondary grades.

Students in PreK-4 will go 100 percent on-site beginning on Monday, October 5.

Bourff said he is exploring an extension for a virtual-only option. He met with parents of virtual-only students last (cont.)

Monday, who shared that their students have had positive experiences thus far, but there were inconsistencies among some. The board has a work session on October 1 where they will be discussing virtual learning in more detail.

Accommodations for students of staff in grades 9-12 who are attending school five-days-a-week will be adjusted due to issues of inequities. Bourff said at the high school-level, where students compete for GPAs and scholarships, all students need to be on a level playing field.

Bourff also mentioned the need for more substitute teachers willing to fill-in when called upon. Director of Staff and Student Services Ryan Taylor said there are currently 289 regular subs on the list, but only 56 have filled an open position this year. Taylor says the priority is to always fill vacancies at the K-6 level first.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Dr. Allen Bourff reviewed several areas of interest with board members during Wednesday's meeting, which included:

- Work has resumed on the Portrait of a Graduate, which will help prioritize the development of skills that will empower students to be productive citizens of a global community and successful in the workforce of the future. Bourff's desire is to incorporate Portrait of a Graduate into HSE's instructional framework of HSE21.

- All students may receive a hot meal for breakfast and/or lunch at no cost. This accommodation is being funded by the federal government through the end of 2020. There is no requirement or application needed to receive this benefit.
- HSE Schools is still waiting for the final ADM count from the Indiana Department of Education. But according to CFO Cecilie Nunn, enrollment is down by about 400 students compared to this same time last year. Nunn says the greatest loss of students were from the kindergarten level.